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IMB may face Lottie offering shortfall

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Leaders of the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) are outlining options to help avoid deficit spending if the 2002 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO) does not reach its \$125 million goal when the books close May 31.

IMB President Jerry Rankin, a native Mississippian and career missionary, praised God that Southern Baptists continue to give to missions at record levels, but he challenged churches to move from generous support to sacrificial giving for their Great Commission cause.

"This budget challenge is not due to diminished giving on the part of Southern Baptists," Rankin said. "Missions is who we are, and churches are giving at record levels to the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, in spite of the soft economy."

"The challenge is that we allowed our missionary force to grow at a faster rate than giving was increasing. Incremental increases in giving cannot keep up with the amazing growth of the missionary force."

investments did not generate their usual income for the board's budget because of the downturn in the stock market.

The board budgeted for a net personnel increase of 200 in 2002 but actually posted 319. The 2003 budget allows only for a net increase of 150, when the number actually could be much higher.

"We trust God to provide the resources to support the people He is calling to overseas missions," Rankin said. "But until more churches begin to give with the same passion these new missionaries have for a lost world, budget realities require us to keep spending within the limits of income."

While the final offering total will not be known until May 31, projections in mid-April indicated a 1 percent increase in receipts over last year's offering. That would fall about \$10 million short of the \$125 million planned into the 2003 budget.

While most churches collect their 2002 Lottie Moon offerings in December, the International Mission Board continues to receive donations for that offering through May.

Cancellation of some events, restrictions in staff travel and delaying production of some materials are among the initial steps IMB leaders are suggesting to help offset whatever shortfall may occur. Trustees and staff will discuss options to deal with the situation during a May 6-8 meeting in Boston.

FEWER NEW MISSIONARIES?

"Unless giving increases dramatically, the board also may have to take steps to restrict the flow of new missionaries to the field, Rankin said.

"Southern Baptists gave us the assignment of sending their missionaries, and new workers are obeying God's call in record numbers," Rankin said. "We will make whatever sacrifices and cutbacks are necessary to fulfill our mission."

"God's passion for His lost children is what compels missionaries to go," Rankin said. "When Southern Baptist churches — like their missionaries — are overwhelmed with God's love for the lost, they will give with the same passion."

"How sad it would be — with the unprecedented opportunities and accelerating harvest — for us to have to tell God-called missionaries that the money just isn't there to send them," he said.

"How tragic it would be if we have to decide which people groups will not hear about salvation in Jesus Christ because we have not provided the resources to send the missionaries God has called."

For calendar year 2002, Mississippi Baptists have given a total of \$7,194,307.22 to LMCO.

• The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering: <http://resources.imb.org/index.cfm/fa/prod/ProdID/256.htm>



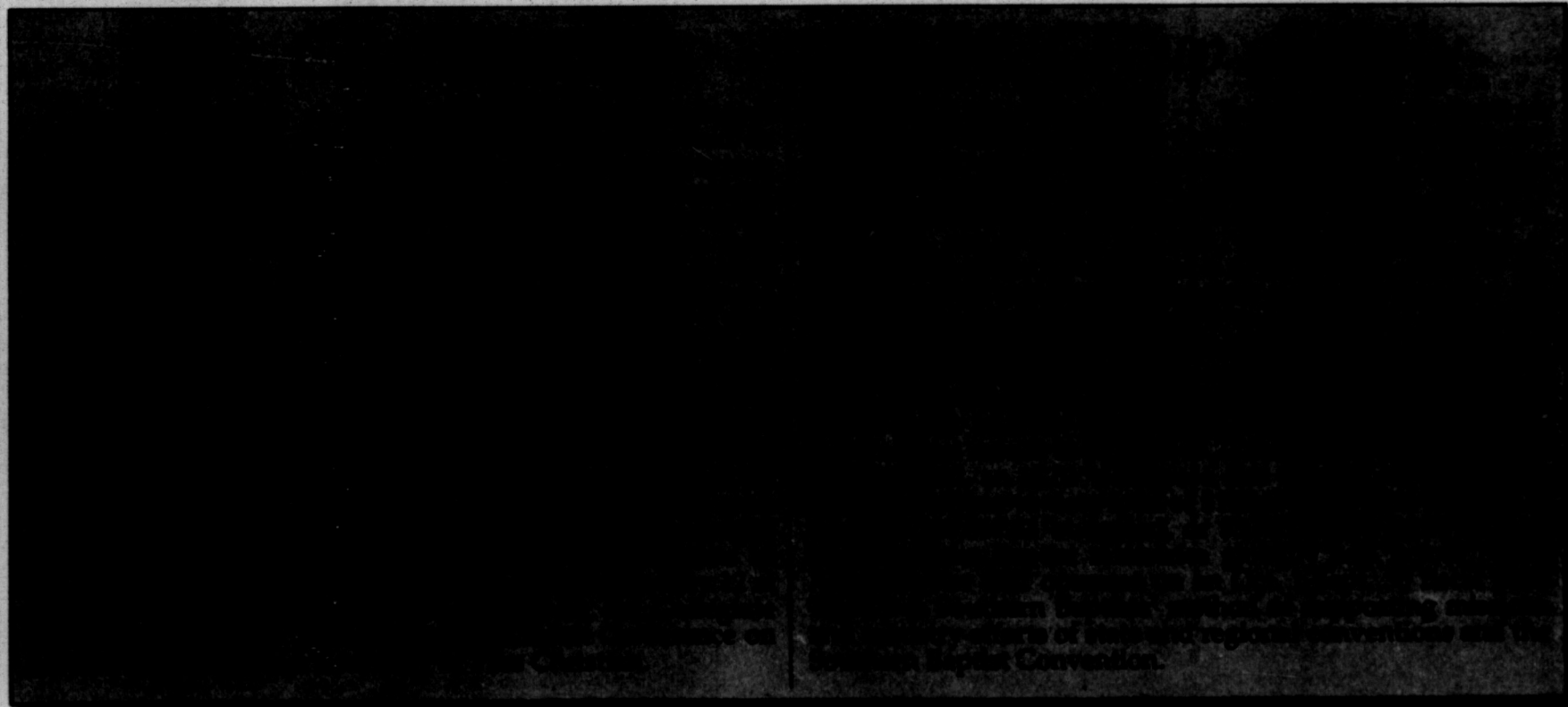
CUTBACKS LOOMING?

New missionaries Guy and Cindy DeMars of Liberty are congratulated by fellow Mississippian and International Mission Board (IMB) President Jerry Rankin during a missionary appointment service last fall at First Church in Broken Arrow, Okla. IMB officials have been forced to make contingency plans for cutbacks at Southern Baptists' missionary sending agency, if gifts fall short of the goal for the 2002 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. (BP photo by Sandy King)

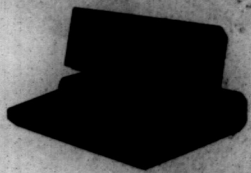
Projections indicate the offering will set a new record for the 10th consecutive year, but the offering and other sources of income are expected to fall millions short of funding the entity's challenging \$290.1 million budget for 2003.

GOING OUTSTRIPS GIVING

Two years of 1,000-plus missionary appointments and lower resignation rates forced the IMB to overspend budgeted amounts for missionary support in 2002. In addition,



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Thank God for mothers

Marine Lt. Col. Mike Presnell had just fought his way across Iraq in one of the most sweeping military advances in the history of warfare. Shortly after his unit made it into a fallen Baghdad, he found himself standing in the middle of one of dictator Saddam Hussein's most opulent palaces. He was somehow able to gain access to a satellite telephone and the first call he made was to his mother, Gloria Presnell, back in the States to describe his once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to wash his hair and brush his teeth in Saddam's gold bathroom.

"Well, I hope you used your own toothbrush," his mother replied.

Now, isn't that just like a mother? Here's her adult son — a hulking, grizzled U.S. Marine Lt. Col. — who has just made it through a full-scale war, and what is it that concerns her? She wants to be sure he's using his own toothbrush!

The great thing is, just about all of us could tell a "mom story" like that — maybe not as dramatic, but just as morally instructive.

Thank God for mothers, who are always sweating the details of whether their son has a clean toothbrush 10,000 miles from home, or whether their daughter's skinned knee has the appropriate dose of antibiotic ointment and clean bandages at precisely scheduled intervals to prevent scarring. They fuss over our hair and spend hours washing and ironing our Sunday clothes just right.

Their cooking skills vary from mom to mom, but very few of us have ever gone hungry. They are tough enough to go face-to-face with the meanest high school coach, yet gentle enough to lay a beloved puppy in its backyard grave with the softest of touches.

Mothers are apt to clean muddy shoe prints from a just-mopped floor without

complaint, and overlook Harry the Frog in a glass jar on the dresser in the kids' room. Contrary to the old wives tale, they really don't mind if we splash a few mud puddles on our way home from school.

One thing they don't seem to tolerate as a class, however, is a dirty child — any dirty child. The tub may have two inches of topsoil in it after the bath water drains, but a kid can be sure every square inch of body (and I do mean every square inch) is showroom clean.

It may be a grandmother, an aunt, a neighbor, or someone else, but a hygienically-challenged fellow can be sure of one thing — if the woman has ever been a mother at any time in her life, you're going to get the scrubbing of your life. Why is that so? This must be one of the eternal mysteries of life, at least for boys.

At any rate, there isn't much a mother won't do for her children, including giving her own life. A mother's place is with her children. Of course she is a real person with needs and aspirations of her own, and should be recognized as such. The father certainly has no less an important and crucial role to play in the family, but that's a column for another day.

This column is about mothers, in honor of their upcoming annual day of recognition. Sure, it's been commercialized just like every other special day on the calendar. Mothers can see through that, though. On Mother's Day, and on the other 364 days of

BALL AND CHAIN TO THE HEART



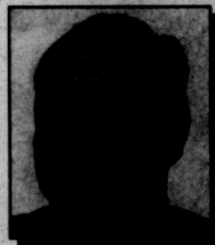
the year for that matter, they can see straight through to their children's hearts.

That's a good trait, for they can see when their children are hurting on the inside as well as the outside. God gave them that special gift. No one else on this earth cares as much as a mother. It's just not possible.

So to all the moms out there who mean so much to so many people, here's to you on your special day. May it be filled with joy and, somehow, peace.

And may their children always have a clean toothbrush with them.

GUEST OPINION:



This Mother's Day, make a difference

By Randy Cotton
Director of Clinical Services
Baptist Children's Village

days at the Village. Hopefully, you consider yourself one of our partners in this ministry.

Perhaps you pray for us in your quiet time or when you think of the blessing of family. Perhaps you send gifts for our children at Christmas.

Maybe you send us financial gift — large, small, regularly, or just when you can. Maybe you have ministered at the Village with hammer or saw in hand, or Bible or crayons.

Anything I could write here would not be enough to thank you for these and the myriad



of other gifts you give us. Today, however, I would like to challenge you to a new way of helping us help Mississippi families.

It can be argued that when Christ taught the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:11-14), He was speaking of the believer who had drifted from the fold. He showed

us the value of that one by leaving the ninety-nine to go and find it, and by the joy of returning one to the flock.

Christ tells us in this parable to go and find these "lost sheep." How might we, as

individual Christians, live this example? In our local Christian communities there are families and individuals who were once part of our Sunday morning congregations, who now have been wounded and hurt. There are "inactive" members on our Sunday School rolls who are struggling with their faith and trying to understand what their lives have become.

This Mother's Day, as you think about all that mothers are, I challenge you to go after a "lost sheep" as only a mother would, with healing in her hands and unencumbered love in her heart.

Call that single mother who is struggling to keep together what is left of her family. She may not know she is still welcome at church since the divorce.

Send a card or note to the father whose son or daughter has embarrassed him in the community. He may not know you went through the same thing years ago.

Stop by to see that church member who has not been back to church since he relapsed after five years of sobriety.

Partner with us in ministry by seeking out those "lost sheep" and meeting their needs only as Christ would, with love and healing.

Horse whisperer using talents for outreach

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP) — An untamed, never-ridden horse is brought stomping and kicking into a 40-foot-round pen to encounter a horse whisperer. People in the surrounding bleachers watch and listen over the course of 90 minutes as the horse changes from being wild — without value, the horse whisperer points out — to being appreciated, disciplined, and valuable.

The seven performances in different Alabama cities during one week will touch perhaps 5,000 people, says Sammy Gilbreath, who developed the Cooperative Program (CP) Missions outreach three years ago through the Alabama State Board of Missions.

The horse whisperer program, Gilbreath explained, focuses on "people who either have horses, like horses or are just interested in horses. It takes an old training technique that spends time with a horse without force. ...We relate everything we do to the horse to how a person comes to know Christ."

The "we" includes Paul Daily, a horse trainer from Trout, La., and Gilbreath whose connections as director of evangelism for the Alabama Baptist Convention's State Board of Missions this year will place the outreach in Geneva, New Brockton, Luverne, Decatur, Danville, and Rainsville from May 19-24.

Gilbreath credits the Cooperative Program for making the evangelism ministry happen. CP Missions gifts from local churches, for example, cover Daily's expenses for the week including site rentals and promotional costs.

"I think [the Cooperative Program] is the greatest tool God has ever given us to take the gospel to mankind," Gilbreath said. "We can do cooperatively far more than any of us could do ourselves. These ministries are helping churches understand this.

associations to be responsible for bringing in crowds of unchurched horse lovers — 500 at one location, 1,000 at another, 1,500 at another — to watch the horse whisperer at work.

"We tell the people in the stands what we hope to accomplish in an hour and a half,"

barrel racing horses. At one event I led this guy to the Lord. That set me on fire to see how many more people are there out there who are open to the Gospel."

One thing led to another. After 30 years in the pastorate, Gilbreath in 1996 found a new calling, as Alabama State Board of Missions' director of evangelism.

"There's a whole passel of people out here who are not being touched — entire segments of the population we're not reaching in church," Gilbreath said. "We began to look for a way to reach them."

With the support of CP Missions through the Alabama State Board of Missions, Gilbreath led in the development of trail rides with an evangelistic thrust, western-themed



CALMING TOUCH — Paul Daily takes an unbroken horse and, during the course of a "Horse Whisperer" outreach sponsored by Alabama Baptists' CP Missions, builds the horse's trust — while sharing the plan of salvation to rapt audiences of hundreds of people. (BP photo)

Each church that contributes to the Cooperative Program is a part of what we're doing here in Alabama."

The Cooperative Program is the Southern Baptist Convention's strategy for working together to reach people for Christ in the United States and around the world. CP Missions also helps train future pastors, missionaries and other ministry leaders in six seminaries as well as providing a host of resources to help local churches grow.

Gilbreath, whose work is 100% funded by CP Missions, arranges for local churches and

Gilbreath said. "We make the analogy that that's how we are without Christ — untamed, undisciplined, running in circles like this horse in a pen."

The horse whisperer seems to ignore the horse at first, but the horse knows he's there and in a few minutes begins to glance at the man. "That's the way we were," Gilbreath said. "We just glanced at God."

Trust is built as a non-threatening relationship is developed, and within 90 minutes the horse whisperer is riding the horse. Onlookers are asked, "Isn't it time you stopped running and allowed God to bring order to your life?"

Gilbreath was reared on a family farm and raises registered quarterhorses.

"I almost stumbled into realizing how important it was to share your faith," he said. "In about 1980, I was raising professional

tracts that pack a wallop, regulation rodeos complete with a Christian message, and more.

"There are churches now planning equestrian weekends," Gilbreath said. "Others are having rodeos, country gospel musical events and the like. These activities? They're designed for reaching people that we just have not been reaching. Basically it's building bridges with a group of people who have sort of been written off as 'unreachable.'"

That's the way Jesus reached people, Gilbreath said, by becoming one with them.

"I find when I'm on a horse they relate to me," Gilbreath continued, speaking of folks he meets during his continuing involvement in area rodeos and other equestrian events. "When I'm out there roping with them or working a bucking chute, they relate to me as one of them, whereas if I drove up in a coat and tie they probably wouldn't."

Looking back

10 years ago

A security camera videotape from Alabama provides one of the few clues in the disappearance of Jim Everett, age 41, pastor of Southside Church in Yazoo City. He has been missing for three weeks since leaving his home to visit his mother in a Meridian nursing home.

20 years ago

Southern Baptist church secretaries, in a move to achieve professional recognition, vote in the Second National Conference for Church Secretaries to move toward a national church secretaries organization. Almost 700 secretaries from 30 states attended the conference at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

50 years ago

Virgil Fox of New York City presents the dedication recital on the Dora Mars Ross memorial organ at First Church, Hattiesburg. The Kilgen Pipe organ was specifically designed for the church, with sufficient power for the 1400-seat sanctuary of the new building.

Officials crack down

OSLO, Norway (BP) — Authorities have moved to crush a Baptist street library in the city of Bendery in the unrecognized republic of Transdniestria in eastern Moldova, Forum 18 News Service reported. The Baptists belong to congregations of the International Council of Churches of Evangelical Christians/Baptists, which rejects registration on principle in all the former Soviet republics where it operates. Its congregations in Transdniestria have long faced obstructions to their work from the authorities, which remain close to the local diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. An April 24 statement from Baptists in the eastern European city reached Forum 18 News Service's offices in Oslo, Norway, reporting that four days earlier police had confiscated all of the street library's books for a second time. "The local authorities in the city of Bendery are obstructing the work of the mobile Christian library and have drawn up police records against the Christian library workers with the aim of judicial persecution," according to the Baptists' statement. Police chief Valeri Smyk told Forum 18 on April 29 that the activity is illegal in Transdniestria, stating also that the Baptists didn't have a license for operating a street library. However, different agencies are passing responsibility to each other for the incidents, Forum 18 stated. Smyk declined to say why street libraries are illegal and referred all enquiries to the Bendery branch of the Transdniestria State Security Ministry (MGB, the local successor to the KGB). He also refused to say whether the Baptists will face prosecution. Several Baptists have had fines imposed on them this year. Aleksandr Kulysh, of the church in Krasnoe, was fined twice for using a building on his land as a church. The authorities stated that because the congregation does not have registration, the church was built illegally.



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THE
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FRONT PAGE

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Appointees announced by Graham

PHOENIX (BP) — Appointments to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee on Committees to serve during the June 17-18 SBC annual meeting in Phoenix have been announced by SBC President Jack Graham. Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, announced the appointments on May 2. SBC bylaws require the president to announce the appointments "at least 45 days in advance of the meeting."

The Committee on Committees has 70 members, two from each of the 35 state or regional conventions qualified for representation on SBC entities.

SBC Bylaw 19 says the Committee on Committees "shall nominate all special committees authorized during the sessions of the convention not otherwise provided for." The usual responsibility of the committee is to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations, which, in turn, nominates trustees to serve on the various national entities of the SBC.

Mississippi appointees include Eric Thomas, pastor of First Church, Vicksburg, and Gene Henderson, pastor of First Church, Brandon. A complete list of Committee on Committee appointees can be found at <http://www.sbc Baptist press.org/bpnews.asp?ID=15845>.

James Braswell, a member of 38th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, was named by Graham to the Credentials Committee, which serves each year during the SBC annual meeting. A complete list of Credentials Committee appointees can be found at <http://www.sbc Baptist press.org/bpnews.asp?ID=15847>.

No Mississippians were named to the Tellers Committee, which serves each year during the SBC annual meeting. A complete list of the Tellers Committee appointees can be found at <http://www.sbc Baptist press.org/bpnews.asp?ID=15846>.

Mississippi nominees set for SBC positions

PHOENIX (BP) — Nominees to serve on the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee in Nashville, the four denominational boards — International Mission Board in Richmond, Va., North American Mission Board in Atlanta, Ga., LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, and Annuity Board in Dallas — as well as the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville, the convention's six seminaries, and the Committee on Order of Business have been selected by the 2003 SBC Committee on Nominations.

Nominees will serve if elected by the messengers to the SBC annual meeting June 17-18 in Phoenix. Mississippi nominees and current trustees include:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 82 MEMBERS

No new Mississippi nominees. Currently serving trustees are:

- Jim Butler, pastor of Trinity Church, Southaven. Term expires 2004.
- Ida South, member of First Church, Mathiston. Term expires 2005.
- Clark Stewart, pastor of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs. Term expires 2006.

ANNUITY BOARD 45 MEMBERS

Nominated for a second term is William T. (Dale) Patterson, member of First Church, Jackson. Term expires 2007.

Currently serving trustee is Frank Harmon, director of church-minister relations and annuity for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson. Term expires 2004.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD 87 MEMBERS

Nominated for a first term is Charles E. Smith Jr., evangelist and member of Meadowview Church, Starkville. Term expires 2007. He replaces retired pastor Frank W. Gunn of Biloxi, who will complete his second term on the board.

Nominated for term to expire in 2006 is Don M. Boone, senior pastor of First Church, Louisville, replacing Chuck Herring of Richland, who resigned.

Currently serving trustee is Wayne Marshall, pastor of Longview Heights Church, Olive Branch. Term expires 2004.

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD 58 MEMBERS

No new Mississippi nominees. Currently serving trustees include:

- Reva Daniel, member of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. Term expires 2006.
- Joe Strahan of Vicksburg. Term expires 2006.

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES 58 MEMBERS

No new Mississippi nominees. Currently serving trustees include:

- Mike Webb, member of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs. Term expires 2005.
- Mark Anderson, pastor of Colonial Heights Church, Jackson. Term expires 2006.

SOUTHERN SEMINARY 65 MEMBERS

No new Mississippi nominees. Currently serving trustees:

- Odean Puckett, retired pastor from Ridgeland. Term expires 2005.
- Glenn A. Miles, member of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs. Term expires 2006.

SOUTHWESTERN SEMINARY 40 MEMBERS

Nominated for a first term is Edward N. Knox, pastor of Antioch Church, Columbus. Term expires 2008. He replaces Billy Brumfield, pastor of Immanuel Church, Vicksburg, who is ineligible for reelection.

NEW ORLEANS SEMINARY 40 MEMBERS

Nominated for a first term is G. Mack Grubbs, member of Temple Church, Hattiesburg. Term expires 2008. He replaces Michael Clauch of Slidell, La., who is ineligible for reelection.

Currently serving trustees include:

- Phil Hanberry, member of Willow Point Church, Hattiesburg. Term expires 2007.
- Jerry L. Smith, pastor of First Church, Summit. Term expires 2006.

- Albert H. McMullen, retired pastor, Meridian. Term expires 2006.

SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY 30 MEMBERS

No new Mississippi nominees. Currently serving trustee is Richard W. Headrick, member of Salem Heights Church, Laurel. Term expires 2006.

MIDWESTERN SEMINARY 35 MEMBERS

Nominated for second term is Gary R. Peek, member of Four Mile Creek Church, Moss Point. Term expires 2008.

GOLDEN GATE SEMINARY 39 MEMBERS

Nominated for second term is Wilton T. Bennett, senior adult minister at Russell Church, Meridian. Term expires 2008.

ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

No new Mississippi nominees. Currently serving trustee is Jim Brown, member of Trinity Church, Southaven. Term expires 2006.

COMMITTEE ON ORDER OF BUSINESS 7 MEMBERS

No Mississippi nominees.

Editor's note: A complete list of nominees can be found at <http://www.sbc Baptist press.org/bpnews.asp?ID=15844>.

Hemphill condemns 'speculation' on retirement

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP and local reports) — Southwestern Seminary (SWBTS) President Kenneth S. Hemphill denied a report by the Texas Baptist Standard newspaper that his retirement from the Fort Worth seminary was prompted by an ultimatum from a small group of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) leaders, calling the allegation "speculation that borders on libel."

The April 21 story by Mark Wingfield, managing editor of the Standard, relied on a number of unnamed sources to report about Hemphill's April 8 retirement announcement after nine years of service. A version of The Baptist Standard report was also distributed by Associated Baptist Press news service.

In a letter to the Standard April 23, Hemphill wrote, "Slander and gossip damage the precious name of our Lord, the cause of His Kingdom, and hurt the body of Christ."

According to "most insider accounts," Wingfield wrote, "Hemphill was urged to leave the Southwestern presidency by a small group of SBC leaders. Sources both in Fort Worth and North Carolina told the Baptist Standard Hemphill had been called to a meeting in North Carolina a few years ago in which he was told either to resign or be fired."

Hemphill asserted in his letter to the paper that no such meeting ever occurred, and that the Standard could have called him to clarify what the meeting was about.

"No group of SBC leaders has ever met with me about a deal to remain at or leave Southwestern. Mark refers to a North Carolina meeting where I was 'reportedly' instructed to resign or be fired. No such

meeting ever occurred! The only meeting in North Carolina was held at my request over the Christmas holidays two years ago at Calvary Baptist Church with my three mentors, Mark Corts, Jimmy Draper, and Charles Fuller. I asked them to pray with me concerning my desire to move back to pastoral ministry," Hemphill wrote.

Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville and a former two-term SBC president, supported Hemphill's claim, saying that Wingfield's assertion was "patently a lie."

Wingfield further claimed that some leaders of the convention essentially brokered a deal "to allow Hemphill to stay until now and then to be moved to the specially created position in Nashville — where he would continue to be paid for the next year by Southwestern."

Hemphill wrote that no group of SBC leaders had ever met with him to discuss a deal to remain at or leave Southwestern. Draper, Patterson, and Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, said Wingfield had erred there as well.

"There was never any meeting I know anything about to broker a position for him here in Nashville. We didn't even know this (Empowering Kingdom Growth) emphasis was going to come about until it was approved last June," Draper said.

Draper also said it was only in the past two months that the need became clear to have an individual serve as a spokesperson for the SBC-wide Empowering Kingdom Growth (EKG) initiative. "Because of Ken's work with our church growth concepts in the early 1990s, his name came up as someone who could fulfill that role," Draper said.

"The implications drawn by the Baptist Standard and the motivations assigned to my decision about EKG leadership are not even partially true," Chapman said. "My greatest concern is that, left as stated, the article will diminish the importance of Dr. Hemphill's role as national strategist for EKG. As I said in an open statement two weeks ago, I am extremely thrilled and energized that Dr. Hemphill has agreed to serve the Southern Baptist Convention as national strategist for Empowering Kingdom Growth."

The chairman of the seminary's board of trustees, David Allen, also took exception to Wingfield's story. The allegations in the Standard about the North Carolina meeting and a brokered deal are "patently false," Allen said.

"I spoke with Ken personally, and there was no time when he met with SBC leaders who said he had to resign. Likewise, there was never a meeting of trustees where any individual or group on the board of trustees at the seminary asked him to resign," Allen said.

Billy Brumfield, pastor of Immanuel Church in Vicksburg and Mississippi's trustee on the Southwestern Seminary board, said on May 5, "I was deeply saddened by the President's recent announcement. I believe Ken when he said, 'This is God's will.'"

"I'm glad Ken is clearing up the rumors with the truth. Ken was a great leader at SWBTS, and I'm praying for God to give us another great leader for the 21st century."

Marv Knox, editor of the Standard, responded to Hemphill's letter informing him that it would appear in the April 28 edition of the paper.

MOMS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

God certainly knew what He was doing and He knew what we needed when He made mothers! Mothers face an impossible task, but they are the only ones who even come close to doing what needs to be done in the family. Moms have to be educators with a full range of knowledge in every academic discipline imaginable. They have to be skillful psychologists to unravel all the relational entanglements that take place in a family and with friends, to say nothing about meeting the needs of each one of the diverse children they may have. They have to be theologians so that they can answer every question about God that a child's mind might conceive and they have to hold a deep understanding of Scripture so that the answer will be factual and Biblical.

It also helps if mom is athletic to some degree and artistic to an even greater degree. She also must know something about agriculture, archeology, acrobatics, and astronomy. Moms are remarkable beings! Now with all of



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

these, and many other assets, her highest accomplishment will be reached as she loves and nurtures her children. Moms do make a difference, but what happens if mom is not around?

Just a few years ago my mother went on to be with the Lord. Her home-going left a huge hole and a huge vacuum in our family. We miss her, but thankfully she was with us all during our growing-up, maturing years and she even saw most of her grandchildren grown — but, what if mom is not there at the most needed time in a child's life?

It is at that point that we are blessed to have a huge home in Mississippi Baptist life that provides for those children. The Baptist Children's Village cannot be a mother and cannot

replace mothers, but it can be a first-rate, top-notch, substitute for mom. Yet, the provisions that are made to care for kids in these critical situations are only possible if we care.

Annually, churches across Mississippi are asked to think and thoughtfully give to the special Mother's Day Offering for the Baptist Children's Village. This year let me encourage you to do something extra. Think about it in this way. If you have ever needed the Baptist Children's Village to help you or your family through a crisis, then give all you can out of gratitude and bless someone else.

On the other hand, if the Lord has blessed you and your family and has taken care of your needs and provided for you in every situation so that

you have not needed the Baptist Children's Village for any sort of crisis, then give out of gratitude for God's care and protection in your home.

There are many different reasons why a mom may be separated from her children and need the intervention that only caring Christian child-care can provide. She may no longer be there because of death, because of a tragic disease, or possibly because of consequences of wrong decisions. It could be anything from prison to insurmountable problems, none of which can be fully understood by a child who is in need.

For decades now, children who are less fortunate than most of us have found themselves lifted up out of the experience in which they are caught and brought into an environment of love, security, provision, encouragement, help, and health because Mississippi Baptists have cared. This year the need for God's people to respond graciously and lovingly is as great as it has ever been before.

Give and you will be blessed and you will be a blessing!

Bush advisor to address MC law grads

Condoleezza Rice, national security advisor to U.S. President George W. Bush, will deliver the 28th commencement address for the Mississippi College (MC) School of Law at 2 p.m. on May 16 in the sanctuary of First Church, Jackson.



Rice

At Stanford University in Palo Alto, Ca., where she served as provost for six years, Rice has been a member of the Center for International Security and Arms Control, a Senior Fellow of the Institute for International Studies, and a Fellow (by courtesy) of the Hoover Institution. Her books include *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, with Philip Zelikow; *The Gorbachev Era*, with Alexander Dallin; and *Uncertain Allegiance: The Soviet Union and the Czechoslovak Army*.

From 1989 through 1991, the period of German reunification and the final days of the Soviet Union, she served in the administration of U.S. President George H.W. Bush as Director, and then Senior Director, of Soviet and East European Affairs in the National Security Council, and a Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

In 1986, while an international affairs fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations, she served as Special Assistant to the Director of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In 1997, she served on the Federal Advisory Committee on Gender-Integrated Training in the Military.

The Mississippi College School of Law will confer degrees on approximately 110 students during commencement.

National Day of Prayer observed across nation

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Bush described the last month as "another time of testing for America and another time of intense prayer" as he observed National Day of Prayer on May 1 at The White House in Washington, D.C.

"Americans have been praying for the safety of our troops and for the protection of innocent life in Iraq. Americans prayed that war would not be necessary and now pray that peace will be just and lasting. We continue to pray for the recovery of the wounded and for the comfort of all who have lost a loved one."

"The Scriptures say: The Lord is near to all who call on Him," the President said.

Many Americans have adopted a member of the armed services for prayer during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and some have worn bracelets as reminders to pray for military personnel, he said.

Bush thanked the military chaplains attending the National Day of Prayer observance. "You make a tremendous difference in the lives, the daily lives of people who are frightened and lonely and worried and strong and courageous," he told them. "I appreciate so very much what you have done and will continue to do."

His early morning remarks at The White House came on a day in which he also declared major battles for Iraq's liberation were finished, as he spoke in the late afternoon from the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln in the Pacific Ocean.

During the National Day of Prayer event, Bush said one of the reasons America is strong is "because we know the limits of human strength. All strength must be guided by wisdom and justice and humility. We pray that God will grant us that wisdom,

that sense of justice and that humility in our current challenges, and in the years ahead."

The President described prayer as "an act of generosity" that teaches humility and leads to gratitude. "We find that the plan of the Creator is sometimes very different from our own," Bush said. "Yet, we learn to depend on His loving will, bowing to purposes we don't always understand."

He thanked the participants at The White House observance "for helping to keep prayer an integral part of our national life."

The President issued a National Day of Prayer proclamation on the day prior to

the event. The proclamation may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/04/20030430-22.html>.

The White House event was one of thousands held as part of an annual observance that began in 1952. A prayer service featuring religious and government leaders was held in a U.S. House of Representatives office building, and times of prayer were set aside in communities and houses of worship throughout the country.

Mississippians observed the Day of Prayer with their own service on the steps of the New Capitol in Jackson.



PRESIDENT IN PRAYER — U.S. President George W. Bush (right) and First Lady Laura Bush (second from right) bow their heads in prayer during a National Day of Prayer ceremony on May 1 in the White House. The Bushes were joined at the service by James Dobson (second from left) and his wife Shirley (left), who chairs the annual prayer initiative. (BP photo courtesy of The White House)

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Immanuel Church, Greenwood, held a GA recognition service on April 27. The



GAs of Immanuel Church, Greenwood

theme was My Place in My Community. Danny Irvin is pastor. Pictured (from left, front) are Stephenie



GAs of Pleasant Grove Church, Brookhaven

McCrimmon, Anna Robertson, Christian Robertson, Lacey Sanford, Mary Catherine Carver, (back) Suzzy McCrimmon, leader, Marleigh McCrimmon, Julie Carver, Rachael Ellis, Courtney Irvin, Angie Irvin, leader.



Curtis Broadwater, Don Walton, Jessie Rae Broadwater, Alyson Broadwater, and Jane Walton

This year's Flowering of the Cross took place early Easter morning at Davis Road Church, Terry. Four generations of the Webb/Walton family were present.

Pictured (from left) are Curtis Broadwater, Don Walton holding Jessie Rae Broadwater, Curtis' wife Alyson, and Don's wife Jane.

White Oak Church, Magee, will be hosting a Women's Conference on May 10 beginning with registration at 8 a.m. The conference will feature Shelly Overby, praise and wor-

ship; Jennifer Goree, sign language presentation; Nada Tullos, music on the harp; and guest speakers, Kathy Boyd and Margaret Lay. The conference cost is \$7. For more information and advance registration, call (601) 269-3604.

Gaston Church, Booneville, recently had three participants in the State Bible Drills held at First Church, Tupelo. Pictured (from left) are Danielle Bishop, Bethany Murphy, and Annie Corbin.

Nearly 150 volunteers from across 11 states gathered together for a weeklong missions experience in New Orleans, La. on April 6-12. As part of the WMU's Volunteer Connection, MissionsFEST provides volunteers an opportunity to partner with local Christians in a concentrated effort to support ongoing missions projects and use their individual gifts to reach out, help others and share the love of Christ. Volunteers from Mississippi were from: Benton-Tippah Association, Blue Mountain; Rankin Baptist Association, Pelahatchie; Calvary Church, Waynesboro; Como Church, Como; Harrisburg Church, Tupelo; and the State WMU, Jackson. Teams of volunteers tutored elementary students, prayerwalked, ministered at homeless shelters, cleaned and did repair work at local Baptist centers, helped with the construction of a new church, and participated in various other activities. For more information on Volunteer Connection and MissionsFEST or FamilyFEST events, call (205) 991-4097.

Courtland Church, will hold YouthQuake May 11-14. Food and fellowship begins nightly at 6 p.m. with worship at 7 p.m. Roger Howell will be speaking and DeVine will bring live music. For more information, call (662) 563-8248 or (662) 563-8513.

decisions for salvation each day and many seeds were planted. Pictured are the team members.

The older GAs of **Pleasant Grove Church, Brookhaven**, visited some of the elderly shut-ins and community nursing homes. These GAs are known as The Grace Girls because they sing together on trips like this one. Pictured (from left) are Modena Robinson, Katie Mullins, Brittany Fauver, Laina Laird, Megan Lea, Julie Case, and Brady Britt.

Pearson Church, Pearl, will hold Gospel Fest

Lafayette/Marshall Association Mission Trip

The Lafayette/Marshall Associations sponsored a mission trip to Nopolis Brazil March 7-16. Ministry teams consisted of Backyard Bible School, medical, evangelism, and construction. There were several

featuring the Crystal River Band on May 10 at 6 p.m. Admission is free and a love offering will be taken. Barbeque Chicken Plates will be on sale at 4:30 p.m. For more information, call (601) 939-3618.



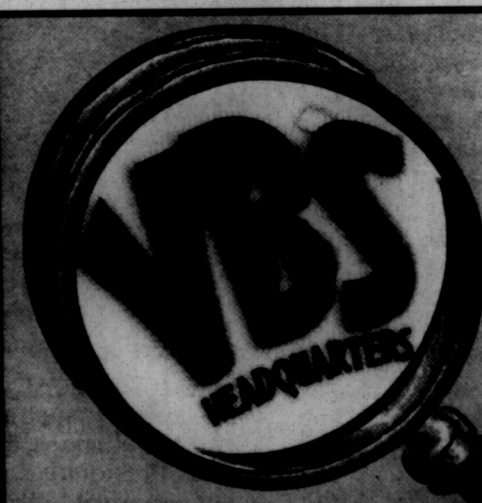
Gaston Church State Bible Drill Participants, Booneville

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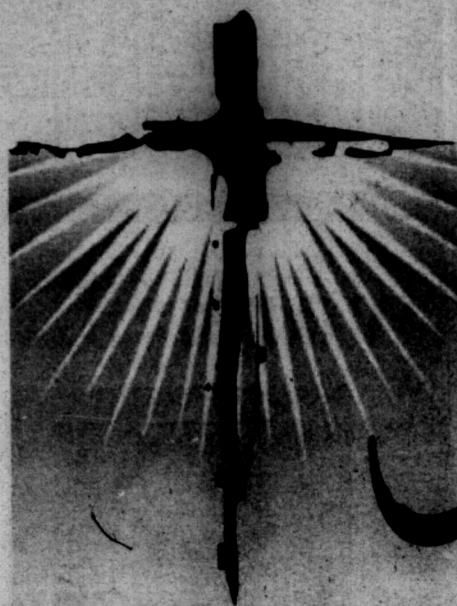
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Missions Mobilization

VOL. IV, NO. I

SPRING 2003



PURPOSE:
TO PROVIDE AN
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VOLUNTEERS
TO USE THEIR SKILLS
TO WITNESS FOR CHRIST
THROUGH MISSION
PARTNERSHIPS.

Pastor Shemchishin preaches in Mississippi

By Ken Rhodes, Director
MBCB Missions Mobilization

Pastor Vladimir Shemchishin of Ukraine visited Mississippi March 19-24. Pastor Shemchishin, former senior pastor of the Odessa oblast (area), continues to serve as pastor of Illichosk Baptist Church. Along with pastoral responsibilities, pastor Shemchishin serves as president of the Odessa Theological Seminary. Additionally, pastor Shemchishin is one of the vice-presidents of the Baptist Union of Ukraine which means he serves over the senior pastors of five oblasts - Odessa, Kherson, Nikoliev, and Crimea.

Pastor Shemchishin spoke in the March 19 Baptist Building employees chapel service. Later in the day a number of leaders from the Mississippi Baptist Convention met with pastor Shemchishin to discuss accomplishments of the partnership and further opportunities existing within Ukraine.

While visiting Mississippi, pastor Shemchishin attended the inauguration of Dr. Lee G. Royce as president of Mississippi College. Pastor Shemchishin was welcomed as the Sunday morning service speaker by Mantee Baptist Church. On Sunday evening pastor Shemchishin spoke at First Baptist

Church of Louisville. Sunday evening services were preceded by a reception in pastor Shemchishin's honor given by folks from Louisville who have participated in Ukraine missions.

Pastor Shemchishin wished to express to all Mississippi Baptists his deepest regards and appreciation for the contribution made to Ukraine. There will be 16 groups from Mississippi going to the Odessa, Kherson, and Nikoliev areas in 2003.

Pastor Shemchishin

Mississippi/Ukraine partnership expands opportunities after June

By Ken Rhodes, Director
MBCB Missions Mobilization

A church planting strategy offering further expansion of the Mississippi/Ukraine partnership is being developed and scheduled to be offered Mississippi churches and associations after June.

The Missions Mobilization Department of Mississippi Baptists, along with the International Mission Board, the Ukraine Baptist Union, and the European Baptist Union have been in dialogue related to a strategy of recruiting, training

and sending Russian speaking Ukrainian church planters from the Odessa Seminary to Belarus, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan.

A planning meeting was held in Kiev, Ukraine this

past November and a follow-up meeting in Jackson during February. The final meeting of planning will be the first week of June in Moscow, Russia.

The opportunity will be for the Ukraine Baptist Union, European Baptist Union, and the International Mission Board to recruit church planters. Mississippi churches and/or associations can sponsor church planters being relocated for approximately \$1,500 each and for two-three years in the new location for \$2,500-\$3,500 annually. Church planters will be accountable to the International Mission Board strategy coordinator for respective areas. The goal is that each new start will be self-supportive within the two-three year time frame.

Sponsoring churches and associations will be given personal contact information of church planters and area to which they are assigned. The opportunity for prayer support and visiting to assist with ministry will also be possible.

Watch for future information through publicity reports from missions mobilization.

Missions Mobilization Celebration

**First Baptist Church, Jackson
Celebration Banquet
November 14, 2003**

**Mississippi Baptist Convention
Board Building
November 15, 2003
Area Conferences**

For more information, please contact
the MBCB Missions Mobilization Dept.

1. Southeast Asia - Date: September 29-October 10.
Who? Pastor/minister of missions and/or key lay person from local church. Preliminary itinerary is to fly into Bangkok for orientation. Visit focus locations and return to Bangkok for debriefing. Areas to consider for focus visit are throughout Southeast Asia. **Goal:** To connect with unreached people and/or connect with Mississippi company folks.

2. Eastern Europe - Date: November 14-15, 2003.
Who? Pastor/minister of missions and/or key lay person from local church. Preliminary itinerary is to fly into Kiev for orientation. Visit focus locations and return to Kiev for debriefing. Areas to consider for focus visit are throughout Eastern Europe. **Goal:** To connect with unreached people and/or connect with Mississippi company folks.

3. Southeast Asia - Date: September 29-October 10.
Who? Pastor/minister of missions and/or key lay person from local church. Preliminary itinerary is to fly into Bangkok for orientation. Visit focus locations and return to Bangkok for debriefing. Areas to consider for focus visit are throughout Southeast Asia. **Goal:** To connect with unreached people and/or connect with Mississippi company folks.

On mission – God is at work

By Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB Missions Mobilization

"Even though the world has changed, the commission of our Lord has not."

Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB
Missions Mobilization

God continues to work magnificently among Mississippi Baptists in calling out volunteers to serve worldwide. From students to senior adults, numerous Mississippi Baptists are willing to go and serve.

Even though the world has changed, the commission of our Lord has not. He has placed within each of our hands the keys to the Kingdom. We have the awesome privilege of helping unlock heaven to people on earth. What we do with the

keys has a great deal to do with who goes to heaven and who goes to hell.

Henry Blackaby in Answer the Call states, "God has put everything in place for His mission to be accomplished – everything, that is, except our obedience." Every church must become a world mission strategy center where individual believers become engaged in taking the keys to help people of all groups come toward the Kingdom.

This engagement takes in our own communities, our state, North America, and the

world. Now is the time for others to join in being mobilized to impact globally for Kingdom growth.

We trust through our missions mobilization ministry we can facilitate effectively the missionaries going from your local world mission strategy center to the world.

Furthermore, we hope that through this newsletter your own vision of what God can do through you will be sharpened. There is a group of people waiting for you to put your key in the lock. How long will they have to wait?



Nikki McRae of the USM spring break team helping at a food pantry at Huntington Street Church in New London, Conn. (Photo by Kris Walters, associate BSU director, USM.)



Wildwood team works with Rays in Ukraine

By Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB Missions Mobilization

Bobby Dungan, pastor of Wildwood Church, Clinton, led a mission team to work with Mike and Linda Ray, missionaries in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine. Pictures tell the story of relationships being built. Wildwood plans to return this summer.

Beware! Being a volunteer may get you focused on longer term mission experiences!

Right: Johnny Johnson (top center) Louisville, First Church, and Pat Green (top right) Wildwood Church, Clinton, leading Bible study. (All photos by Mike Ray, IMB Missionary, Ukraine.)



Left: Bobby Dungan (fourth from left) pastor of Wildwood Church, and his wife Alicia (at his left) stand by Mike Ray (second from right) missionary to Ukraine, during planning time before conducting day camp in Ukraine.

Below: Becky Graves (far right) of Wildwood Church, Clinton, leads games at a Ukraine children's camp.



Above: Michelle Roark from First Church, Yazoo City served on a team to Ukraine this past summer with a group led by Twila Windham from Crossgates Church, Brandon. Michelle caught the vision and passion for Ukraine and is planning to return this summer to spend eight weeks working in the Dnipropetrovsk area with the Rays. Michelle is shown working with children at a day camp in Ukraine.



*"Beware!
Being a volunteer may get
you focused on
longer term
mission
experiences!"*

Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB
Missions Mobilization



"Prayerwalking" – the most powerful missions weapon

By Ken Rhodes, director
MBCB Missions Mobilization

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

on any of the mission opportunities listed in this newsletter, please contact:

Ken Rhodes
P O Box 530
Jackson MS
39205-0530

Phone:
1-800-748-1651
(in state)
1-601-292-3398
(out of state)

E-mail:
krhodes@mbcb.org

It is not just prayerwalking. Rather, prayerwalking is the greatest need and the most powerful weapon in volunteer missions. Volunteers must always be men and women of prayer.

What is prayerwalking?
Prayerwalking is praying as you go – on site intercession. Praying while walking, driving, riding a bus or plane, or sitting on a park bench. Prayerwalking is climbing to the top floor of an apartment building or tower and, while looking out over a city, lifting up the people.

I personally enjoy prayer flying at night. It is a powerful time with God looking down upon the lights of cities of which I do not know the name or the

people. Yet, somehow I believe God answers as I prayer fly. There is a smaller blessing in that it makes flights seem much shorter and I arrive in better attitude.

What are the results of prayerwalking? The soil is prepared for the planting of seed. A crop is prepared for future harvest. Satan's strongholds are penetrated by praying on site and claiming victory in the name above all names. Spiritual insight is gained and one begins to sense a growing compassion for those who remain in darkness.

What do you pray while prayerwalking? You pray as prompted by the Holy Spirit. Areas which He often prompts one to pray are that the stronghold of evil will be broken, the witness of national believers, for those in positions of leadership within the area

being walked, conviction of sin, and an openness for the convincing truth of the gospel to be experienced. Claim the promises of our Father as they are brought to mind.

Prayerwalking is entering the battlefield. Satan is terrified of our prayers. Those having prayerwalked give testimony to how exhausting it can be physically. Yet, the victories are miraculous.

Don't forget! Before prayerwalking somewhere else in North America, or internationally, prayerwalk your community. One has to wonder what would happen if every street was genuinely prayerwalked in Mississippi.

For prayerwalking opportunities throughout the world contact the Missions Mobilization Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Blue Mountain BSU team reaches out to inner city New Orleans at spring break

By Paul Harrell, consultant
MBCB Missions Mobilization

A team of twenty-six students and leaders from Blue Mountain College Baptist Student Union used their spring break to impact New Orleans with the gospel. The team worked with several different ministry sites during the week. A team of six helped serve dinner in an inner city homeless shelter – the Brantley Center. Lessons of forgiveness and beginning again were learned.

The team heard testimonies from various areas on God's loving faithfulness to meet their ministry needs, such as the Carver Center, Lake Forest Church ministry, and others. God blessed the team through every aspect of its work.

Tracy Moser, BSU Director, and Laura Carpenter, Assistant BSU Director participated with this impact team to New Orleans.

Maria Teel, Blue Mountain College student and impact team member, provided the information for this story.



1. ...
2. ...
3. ...
4. ...
5. Northwest Mississippi Community College – 12 people – Pittsburgh, PA
6. University of Southern Mississippi – 4 people – Hattiesburg, MS
7. ...
8. ...
9. Mississippi State University – 16 people – Jackson, MS
10. Metro Jackson BSU – 5 people – Boston, MA
11. Hinds Community College – 20 people – New York City, NY
12. Delta State University – 13 people – Providence, RI
13. Southwest Mississippi Community College – 12 people – Arlington, TX
14. Pearl River Community College – 14 people – Panama City Beach, FL
15. Meridian Community College – 14 people – Kansas City, MO

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NAMES IN THE NEWS



Bridges

Mississippi State University (MSU) President Charles Lee recently honored Golden Triangle Baptist Association employee **Diana Bridges** of Starkville as the Outstanding Community Woman for 2003. For more than eight years she has served as the director of the Golden Triangle Baptist Association's Crossroads International Friendship House.

Utica Church, Utica, recognized **Terrica McBride** recently for having 15



McBride and Ezelle

years perfect attendance in Sunday School. Pictured (from left) are McBride and Mark Ezelle.

Hickory Ridge Church, Florence, recently ordained **Scott Walters** to the ministry. Walters is pastor of Grace Church, Richland.

Liberty Church, Liberty, took a group of 15 to the Seamen Center, Mobile, Ala., on April 7. DeWitt and Katryn Craft, who are monthly workers there joined them.

Union Church, Tylertown, recently recognized the deacon



Friendship Sunday School Class, Fairview Church, Columbus

body for years of service, dedication, and commitment to God and the church. Millard Moak is pastor.

Members of the **Friendship Sunday School Class, Fairview Church, Columbus**, landscaped the yard of a Columbus resident after her home was destroyed by a tornado last November. They also presented her with household items.

Members of Becky Anderson's Sunday School Class, **Fairview Church, Columbus**, recently prepared food for workers with Habitat for Humanity.



Liberty Church, Liberty



Becky Anderson Sunday School Class, Fairview Church, Columbus

STATE CHANGES

Union Church, Tylertown, has called **Pam Brumfield** as youth and children's director.



Brumfield

Wagner to be nominated for Second V.P.

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP) — William L. (Bill) Wagner, professor of evangelism and missions at Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Ca., and an emeritus missionary with the International Mission Board (IMB), will be nominated for second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) when messengers gather for the June 17-18 annual meeting in Phoenix. Paul Kim, founding pastor of Berkland Church in Oakland, Calif., and an IMB trustee, said he will nominate Wagner.

Wagner was nominated for SBC first president in 1998 in Salt Lake City, losing in a two-nominee ballot to the late Rick Ferguson, then-pastor of Denver's Riverside Baptist Church. As a missionary, Wagner served more than 30 years in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. He and his wife Sally have two children, one of whom, Mark Wagner and his family, are IMB missionaries in Germany.

REVIVALS & HOMECOMINGS

Emmanuel, Ocean Springs: June 1; 50th anniversary; choir practice, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; covered dish lunch; afternoon singing.

Union, Tylertown: June 1; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; lunch at noon; afternoon singing; John Wesley Rushing, Tallulah, La., speaking; Hosanna, Magee, music; Millard Moak, pastor.

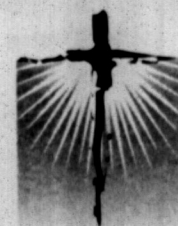
Baxterville, Lumberton: May 25-30; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Glen Davis, Sumrall First, Sumrall, evangelist; Tim Nelson, Trinity, Petal; Raymond Parkin, pastor.

Corinth, Purvis: May 25; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:20 a.m.; New Life Quartet, 11:30 a.m.; covered dish lunch, 12:15 p.m.; David Strebeck, pastor.

County Line, Crystal Springs: May 25; 175th anniversary; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; Roger Stacy, former pastor, preaching.

Wayside, Scobey: May 18; worship, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; Leon Emery, Jackson, speaking; all are welcome.

Whitesand, Prentiss: May 11-14; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Ben James, Utica, speaking; Bill Herman, New Hebron, music; Stan Cheatham, pastor.



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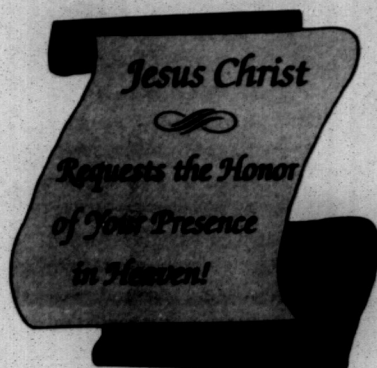
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(*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my
relationship with you.
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ
into my life. From this time
on, I want to live in a loving
relationship with him.
(*I receive Christ as my
Savior and Lord.*)

*But as many as received him, to
them he gave the right to become
children of God, even to those
who believe in his name
(John 1:12).*

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Jesus Christ today, contact
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BAPTIST COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS



Kennedy, Bush, and Webb

Bancorp South presented the William Carey College (WCC) theatre program with a check for \$10,000. The bank will serve as a corporate sponsor of the program for the 2003-2004 academic year. Pictured (from left) are Larry Kennedy, president of WCC, Dave Bush, senior vice president of Bancorp South, and Ted Webb, president Hattiesburg division of Bancorp South during the recent check presentation at the bank.



Jackson

The Annual Meeting of the Blue Mountain College (BMC) Alumnae Association will be held May 16-17. The following reunion classes will be recognized during this weekend: 1938,

1943, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, and 2002. All alumnae are invited and encouraged to participate in the weekend activities. Reservations can be made by calling (662) 685-4771, Ext. 131.

Jeffrey Jackson, Jackson, the Owen Cooper Professor at the Mississippi College (MC) School of Law, was awarded two awards, First Year Professor of the Year and

Outstanding Professor, for teaching excellence at the Law School's Law Day Awards Ceremony on April 6.

Blue Mountain College (BMC) is accepting applications

for 2003 Summer Session. The first session begins with registration on May 27 and ends with exams on June 26-27. The second session begins June 30 and ends with exams on July 30-31. A computer applications short course, Advanced Microcomputer Applications, will be offered July 7-18. For more information, call (662) 685-4161 or (800) 235-0136.



Miller

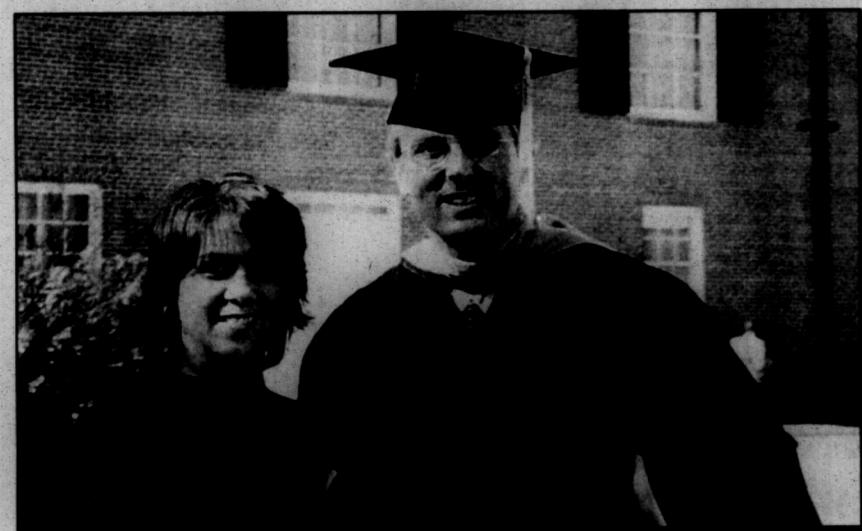
Eaves, Clinton, Professor of History and Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences Emeritus, will be the speaker for the Graduate School Commencement. Calvin Miller, Professor of Preaching and Pastoral Studies, Samford University, Beeson Divinity School, Birmingham, Alabama, will bring the Undergraduate Commencement Address.



Eaves

John David Brashier, pastor of Centreville Church, Centreville, received a Doctor of Educational Ministry degree on December 21 at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Pictured (from left) are

Glen his wife Lianne and Brashier.

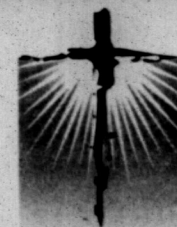


Lianne and John David Brashier

www.mbcab.org



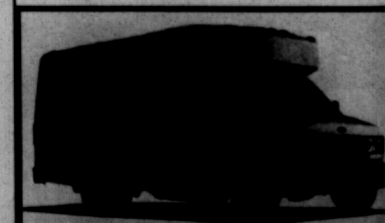
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Million vols sought

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — The North American Mission Board (NAMB) is asking Southern Baptists to examine their own hearts as a starting point for seeking a dramatic move of God nationally. Under the banner of One in a Million, NAMB is seeking one million people to enlist to pray regularly and specifically for personal repentance, personal revival and national spiritual awakening. The effort is in preparation for "What Now?" a continental strategy for evangelism and spiritual awakening in 2005. Schofield said One in a Million also dovetails with the Empowering Kingdom Growth initiative underway across the Southern Baptist

Convention, as well NAMB's Great Commission Prayer Strategy for churches. The basis is 2 Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." Participation in One in a Million begins with registration, either by phone at (770) 410-6333 or through the www.namb.net/prayer site. Weekly updates provide inspiration and challenge to help guide personal prayer efforts. Other resources also are available to help enlist others in the prayer effort.



Evangelist Charles Smith and his family have relocated their home and ministry base to the gentle, rolling hills of Oktibbeha County.

To reach Charles by phone, you may call the offices of Meadowview Church, Starkville, during normal business hours at 662-323-2963; or his cell number at 662-514-1131.

ATTENTION CADETS

Editor:

The Baptist Student Union (BSU) at the United States Air Force Academy would like to contact the men and women reporting to the Academy on June 25 and 26. For those arriving June 25, we will meet them at the airport, provide free lodging, meals, transportation, and take them to the Academy at the appointed time on June 26. For those arriving June 26, the Air Force Academy buses will meet them, but we would like to know of their coming so we can make contact once they have arrived.

This is an opportunity to meet smiling faces and make new Christian friends before beginning Basic Cadet Training. If pastors, parents, relatives, friends, or new cadets will contact us with name, address, telephone, and e-mail address we will contact them to secure flight arrival times and provide further information.

The Air Force Academy BSU is a widely recognized organization and is here for the purpose of contributing to cadets spiritual growth. Through the support

of the North American Mission Board, Colorado Baptist General Convention, Pikes Peak Association, and local churches, the BSU provides a most active and effective ministry. We seek to minister to cadets through Bible study, discipleship and evangelism training, local church involvement, worship, fellowship, along with mission and ministry endeavors.

Please contact Dwain Gregory, 550 West Woodmen Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80919; (719) 599-9094; e-mail: leedgreg@aol.com

Dwain Gregory, Dir.
Bapt. Coll. Min.
U.S. Air Force Acad.

Editor's note: For cadets attending the U.S. Military Academy, the Naval Academy, or Coast Guard Academy, similar ministries are provided:

• At the U.S. Military Academy contact Bill Blackwell, 11 Oak Street, Cornwall, NY 12518; (845) 534-3944; e-mail: yb8731@usma.edu.

• At the Naval Academy contact Kirk Ritchey, 201 Hanover Street, Annapolis, MD 21401; (410) 263-0963; e-mail: ritchey@usna.edu.

• At Coast Guard Academy contact Caci Clemmer, (860) 912-3126; e-mail: cacilou@yahoo.com; or Jen Saunders, e-mail: zion626@yahoo.com.

RULES CHANGED

Editor:

Jerry Rankin's action in terminating missionaries that do not affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message (BFM) by May 5 makes my heart sick. These people were accepted on their statement of faith and their acceptance of the 1960 BFM under which they were appointed. Now the rules have changed. New appointees could be required to sign an allegiance to this new creed but to fire those who have served so faithfully is a disgrace.

Is this 2000 BFM really the work of the Southern Baptist churches or was it drawn up by those who have taken it upon themselves to speak for all Southern Baptist? I, for one, prefer the 1960 BFM.

Henrietta Miller
Fayette

SCHOLARSHIPS SET

Editor:

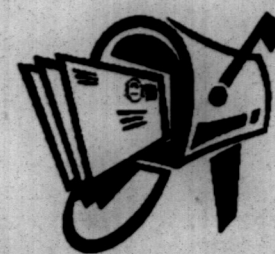
Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. has announced the availability of full tuition scholarships in Church Music for the Fall of 2003. Individual auditions for the scholarships will be held by appointment on campus.

The scholarships are awarded based on musical performance in voice, piano, organ, or instrumental music. Students receiving scholarships may work toward either the Master in Arts in Church Music or the Master of Divinity in Church Music degrees.

To be eligible for the scholarships, students must have earned at least a bachelor's degree in music and audition for the music faculty. Free on-campus housing is available during auditions.

For scholarship allocations, additional information, or to set up an audition, please call (919) 761-2316 or toll free (866) 734-9667.

Jerry Higgins, PR Dir.
Southeastern Seminary
Wake Forest, N.C.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Storms hit Missouri college, bypass seminary

LIBERTY, Mo. (BP) — A tornado that ripped through Kansas and Missouri did extensive damage to Baptist-affiliated William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo. and barely missed Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City left students at both schools counting their blessings.

Tornadoes killed at least 32 people across the United States May 4-5, with at least 14 occurring in Missouri and seven in Kansas. There were no deaths or reported injuries at William Jewell College or Midwestern Seminary.

The tornado hit William Jewell College around 5 p.m. local time. Most of the buildings had some damage and one of them — a wing of a married student complex — may have to be demolished, William Jewell communications director Robert Eisele told Baptist Press.

A "very preliminary" estimate of storm damage is between \$15 and \$20 million, Eisele added. Incredibly, no one was injured. About 70% of the 1,200 students enrolled in day classes live on campus, Eisele said.

"We're really blessed," he said. As of mid-day May 5 the college was still without power. Final exams have been canceled and students have been sent home.

A resident of Liberty, Terry Lamberth of the Clay Platte Association, said many trees on campus were uprooted. "It just looked like a war zone this morning when I went up there," said Lamberth, the association's director of missions. "... It's just remarkable that no one is hurt. We're grateful that none of the students were injured severely."

Two local Southern Baptist churches suffered damage, Lamberth said. First Baptist in

Riverside had roof damage while Second Baptist in Liberty had a roof and a few cars damaged.

"I'm trying to determine what we can do," he said of the association. "... Everybody's just really pitching in."

Midwestern Seminary narrowly escaped damage. A few tree limbs littered the yard around the Vivion Farm Home on campus. During the storm dozens of students and their families took shelter in the basement of the music building, while several stood outside and watched the tornado approaching from several miles away.

"None of us had ever seen a tornado before, and it just kept getting closer and heading toward us, but it seemed to take a different track," said student Greg Unruh. "We all saw the outer part of swirling debris, but everybody stayed pretty calm inside the basement."

Director of campus operations Randy Eaton also saw the tornado. "It appeared to be headed directly across the campus, but it continued to keep inching in a northerly direction as it got closer," he said.

"I thought it might cross the northeast end of resident housing or clip the north campus facility. The campus was just far enough south and east of its path that we escaped," Eaton pointed out.

At least one faculty member's home was damaged. Several neighborhoods near the seminary suffered devastating damage. The seminary is collecting donations of food, bottled water and other items to be given to a local relief agency for victims.

The seminary is also investigating ways students can assist with clean-up efforts.

One member of First Church in Pierce City, Mo., was killed. Dale Taunton, a deacon, died while seeking shelter in the National Guard armory along with other city residents, according to Hubert Conway, Lawrence County (Mo.) Director of Missions.

Pierce City was devastated by the storm. Wreckage made it virtually impossible to walk the streets of the town of nearly 1,400. Two bodies had been pulled from the nearly-leveled armory at press time.

First Church pastor Lyndall Morris said his town was hit hard by the storm, although the church building was spared. Morris said the tornado drove a piece of glass into the neck of one of his church members who went to the hospital and is recovering.

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Nominations to MBC posts solicited

The Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) Committee on Nominations will begin meeting soon to review trustee/board member positions for the MBC boards and commissions for the year 2004.

According to Gary Richardson, chairman of the committee and pastor of North Oxford Church, Oxford, a limited number of vacancies will be filled on the following boards and commissions:

- ◆ Bd. of Ministerial Education
- ◆ Christian Action Comm
- ◆ Education Commission
- ◆ Historical Commission
- ◆ Baptist Children's Village
- ◆ Baptist Health Systems, Inc., of Jackson
- ◆ Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc., Memphis
- ◆ Baptist Main College
- ◆ Baptist College
- ◆ Carey College
- ◆ Baptist Foundation
- ◆ Baptist Conv. Bd.

The Committee on Nominations will work in conjunction with the heads of the commissions and agencies in bringing a list of nominees to be approved by messengers to the MBC 2003 annual meeting on October 28-29 at First Church, Jackson.

Nomination forms can be obtained by contacting the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Executive Administration, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3201 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 201. E-mail: bbox@mbcb.org.

Completed nomination forms will be accepted by first-class mail only, at the above address. All nomination forms must be received by the deadline of May 30.

Missionary authors book on kidnapping

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Gracia Burnham has co-written a book about her experiences relating to the kidnapping and captivity she and her husband endured at the hands of Muslim extremists in the Philippines. The book, called *In the Presence of My Enemies*, was released May 4.

Missionaries to the Philippines, Gracia and Martin Burnham were the focus of countless prayers across the United States and around the world from the time of their kidnapping in May 2001 until their rescue 376 days later in June 2002.

Gracia Burnham emerged from the last gunfight alive, but her husband and Philippine nurse Deborah Yap were killed in the battle. After the rescue, Burnham returned to her home state of Kansas to recover and be with her family. Burnham's book, co-written with Dean Merrill, is being published by New Tribes Mission (NTM), the organization that sponsored the Burnhams in the Philippines.

New Tribes Mission's chairman, Oli Jacobsen, wrote the forward to the book.

"The cruelty and suffering Martin and Gracia experienced at the hands of their captors was worse than I had ever imagined. As I read... I found myself experiencing a gamut of emotions: anger, joy, tears, laughter, but most of all, excitement at how God sustained them," Jacobsen wrote.

The Burnhams had been New Tribes Mission workers since 1985; he was a pilot and she had worked with NTM aviation needs. Based in Sanford, Fla., the interdenominational missions agency focuses on planting indigenous churches among unevangelized people groups in remote areas around the world.

With the release of the book, Burnham is scheduled to make several media appearances in the coming weeks. A list was released by NTM on April 30:

- Good Housekeeping's June issue will have a book excerpt. The magazine hits the newsstands May 12.

- People magazine will have an interview in the May 19 issue, which will be released May 9.

- Readers Digest will run a book review in the June issue.

- The cover story in Decision's June issue will be about Burnham.

- Christianity Today will feature Burnham on the cover of the June issue.

- Today's Christian Woman will feature Burnham in the July/August issue.

- Guideposts magazine will have an article in the July issue.

In addition, New Tribes Mission reports, The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, the London Telegraph, Parade Magazine, and numerous other news providers around the world have asked Burnham for an interview.

Because of the large amount of publicity, Burnham's pastor asks Christians to pray more fervently for her to meet the demands placed upon her.

"She needs our prayers to continue as mom and be the positive influence for Christ that this most unfortunate event has placed her in," Robert Varner said in the New Tribes Mission release. "God has given grace and strength, and she needs to continue to feel His presence and help in her private and public demands."



Martin and Gracia Burnham

The pastor also requested that Christians remember Burnham's children, Zach, Mindy, and Jeff, during this time. "May God do a real work in their hearts and lives and they be yielded to the Lord for His will," he added.

A New Tribes Mission special edition of *In the Presence of My Enemies* at a discounted price may be ordered from the New Tribes Mission bookstore at www.ntmbbooks.com or by calling (800) 321-5375. The book has been in stores since May 4.

N.C. church expelled for homosexual baptisms

CONCORD, N.C. (BP) — A North Carolina church accused of baptizing two unrepentant homosexuals was removed from Cabarrus Association April 28 by a vote of 250-11.

McGill Church in Concord, now in its centennial year, was a founding member of the association. The church baptized the two men last June.

Association officials met privately with church officials before taking action. After the meeting, which was closed to non-association members, Cabarrus Association's Jim Wadford released a statement summarizing the association's action.

"The Cabarrus Baptist Association respects and acknowledges the autonomy of McGill Baptist Church," the statement read. "However, the association must take a stand based on the Scriptures."

The statement said the association must "take a stand against any of our churches supporting or condoning this lifestyle. To allow individuals into the membership of a local church without evidence or testimony of true repentance (a turning away from the old way of living) is to condone the old lifestyle."

The statement referred to Romans 1:26-27 and stressed that the Bible's stance on homosexuality is clear.

The association pointed to its constitution, which states, "The Association shall not maintain fellowship with any church that departs from Southern Baptist faith and practice and fails to maintain a spirit of cooperation with the Association."

McGill Church claims affiliation with both the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, although its messengers likely would not be seated at an SBC annual meeting because the SBC constitution prohibits messengers from churches that "affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior."

The church's affiliations could change. McGill Church pastor Steven Ayers told Baptist Press that a church committee is "examining all of our relationships and seeing where we best fit. ...We haven't excluded anything."

Several churches in and around Asheville, which is about two hours from Concord, are forming a new association in which McGill Church could become affiliated, Ayers said.

The Cabarrus association's actions violated the historic Baptist principles of "autonomy, soul competency and priesthood of the believer," Ayers said. "Autonomy is the main issue here."

The two homosexual men visited the church for a few months before requesting membership, Ayers said.

"When they tell us that they have experienced the risen Lord and have made a profession of faith in Him, and [a profession] to turn their life over to Him, we trust them," he said. "...We don't ask questions."

Regarding the issue of whether homosexuality is a sin, Ayers said a tolerance for various interpretations should have triumphed at the meeting. The Apostle Paul was not referring to homosexuality but instead to pedophilia, he claimed.

"This is where the soul competency and the priesthood of the believer comes in," Ayers said. "Certainly these two people do not feel it's a sin. I've reexamined my own beliefs about it. I'm convinced now it's certainly not what Paul was talking about. Even if it is a sin, that is between them and God."

The association disagreed, saying that the issue is whether unrepentant people should be baptized.

"McGill Baptist Church has chosen to allow into its membership persons who continue to live in a homosexual lifestyle, which is contrary to the teachings of Scripture," the motion to withdraw fellowship read. "Therefore, the spirit of cooperation with the association has been broken and out of a heart of sadness and regret we must withdraw fellowship at this time."

The association tried to follow the biblical model for withdrawing of fellowship, the association's statement said. Association officials first met with Ayers to try and resolve the issue, but Ayers "stated that this was a church issue and the deacons would have to discuss the matter," according to the statement.

The church's deacons and associational leaders met Feb. 28 but failed to produce any agreement.

The association informed the church of the vote to withdraw fellowship in an April 22 letter.

McGill Church, meanwhile, has grown throughout the controversy, Ayers said.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Making Peace in My Family

Genesis 13:1-2, 5-18

By Lori Clendinning

M-o-m... He's doing it again! Nuh-uh, she started it! Did not! Did too!

What household hasn't rung out with this quarrelling concert, this symphony of strife? Children are known for their bickering bouts, but what begins as a typical childhood rift can be particularly unattractive if family strife continues into adulthood. Bad feelings between brothers, strife among sisters, and fighting from fathers, mothers and their offspring is particularly unpleasant.

Indisputably, living peacefully within our families is a difficult task, but one that God desires for all of us. As believers, we must commit to living in peace in order to please God.

This week's lesson focuses on the importance of families working together to resolve conflict.

Before God changed his name to Abraham and made him the father of many nations,

Abram had to deal with a sticky family situation: dividing up the family spoils.

In a secular world-view, some individuals strive by any and all means to selfishly acquire more and more possessions. Such attempts often result in dishonest actions, strife, and quarrels. Conflict over possessions often becomes particularly evident in families after the final parent's death.

Responding to God's leading, Abram left Ur of the Chaldeans and his nephew Lot accompanied him as he returned to Canaan. God had richly blessed Abram for his wealth was much greater than it had been when he first entered Egypt.

As Matthew Henry's commentary points out: God, in his providence, sometimes makes good men rich men, and teaches them how to abound, as well as how to suffer want.

Abram's suffering regarding



Clendinning

his abundance in riches came in the form of squabbling servants. His herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen began to quarrel to the point that the two men, who had been previously inseparable, began to divorce themselves from each other.

Abram's anguish over this rift with his relative is apparent in verse 8 when he pleads with Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me. Despite his rightful position as owner of all this great wealth, Abram's greater desire was to resolve conflict and restore the peace that he and Lot had once enjoyed.

Just like Abram, believers relationships with God and others should always take priority over acquiring possessions. By trusting God, believers can demonstrate generosity toward others.

Abram was able to demonstrate this by allowing Lot to take first choice of the land. Even though he had the legal and spiritual right to lay first claim, Abram generously acquiesced to his nephews desires in order to achieve family peace.

Whenever conflicts arise,

mature believers should show the love of Christ by demonstrating generosity to other family members. By our example we can teach children the adage, When you're facing strife, live Jesus life. Make choices when dealing with family members that you know Christ Himself would choose.

When faced with difficult family situations, believers should reject the natural urge to be selfish toward other family members. God's reservoirs of love and joy are never drained dry, although we may not be making adequate number of trips to refill our canteens.

The power and ability to be unselfish when encountering difficult family members is correlated to time spent in God's presence through praise, prayer, and Scripture reading. We must breathe deeply within His holy presence before we can be fresh air amid a family stink.

Abram did not leave his religion behind him in Egypt, as many do when away from home. Instead, he faithfully turned to God, knowing that peace only comes when God reigns and rules within hearts.

By relying on the Lord, family

members can work together to resolve conflicts peaceably. Faith in God is essential for believers who desire to settle family quarrels.

God rewarded Abram's faith, demonstrated in his peaceable resolution of conflict with his kinsman. The land left to Abram when Lot selfishly bypassed it in favor of more lush surroundings ended up being the more choice location.

Lot expected to receive the greater blessing from the land he chose when they parted ways. Instead, he landed right in the middle of Sodom's strife and misery. What Lot greedily thought was abundant blessing ended up being ruinous and wasteful.

God wants and expects His children to resolve conflict. He desires that we all commit to living together peaceably, choosing to place others first, as Christ Jesus instructed and lived.

May we all commit to living peaceably with each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, putting selfish desires behind us, striving toward conflict resolution.

Clendinning is member of First Church, Brandon.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Trust God Against Overwhelming Opposition

Kings 18:20-26, 36-39

By Harold Simmons

Introduction: Have you ever seen a confrontation between two or three people against one person? Do you remember how you felt? Did it go something like this: "three against one isn't fair" In this Sunday's lesson we have a much greater numerical disparity. In the conflict of Elijah against the 400 prophets of Asherah and the 450 prophets of Baal, Elijah was outnumbered 850 to 1. It doesn't look much like a contest. It appears that the others will win hands down. But, it wasn't 850 to 1. It was 850 to Elijah plus 1 (God). Elijah is going to win "because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4 NIV).

In this confrontation, Elijah

gave a very pointed challenge. He displayed personal courage and a prayerful commitment.

Pointed Challenge (1 Kings 18:20-21) In verses 16-19 of chapter 18, Elijah meets face to face with Ahab to deliver a message that would amount to a challenge. He tells Ahab to gather the people from all over the nation of Israel and to bring all the prophets of Baal and Asherah that "eat at Jezebel's table." He directs that place of meeting to be Mt. Carmel. When everyone is assembled, he issues a challenge to the people to make up their own mind about who is God. Elijah is going to give visible proof to help the people decide their spiritual direction.

This is all taking place on



Simmons

Mt. Carmel. Actually, Carmel is more of a hill than a mountain at just under 1700 feet above sea level, and is part of a ridge that extends for 13 miles. It is a part of the area that has known other battles of army against army. Egyptian literature called Carmel the holy mountain.

Many groups held Carmel as a sacred place. The historic records of Shalmaneser III of Assyria made mention of Carmel as a religious site for Baal worship. There was also an ancient altar for the worship of God (Jehovah) on the mountain. This, Carmel is known for its conflicts and religion. Elijah has set the stage for a religious battle and has given the Baal prophets the home field advantage. God has challenged the people to see that he is the God of Israel and the true God. His challenge meets us today on many Carmels in life to challenge us to see that He is indeed the true God.

Personal Courage (1 Kings 18:22-26) Elijah knew that Baal was only an idol and without any power except that given him in the minds of his followers. Elijah knew that he had nothing to fear from Baal. However, it took a great deal of personal courage to stand strong before the 850 false prophets who, in turn, were threatened by the prophet of the one true God.

Elijah made the contest as fair as he could. He allowed the Baal prophets to choose which bull to offer in sacrifice. Bulls were common as sacrifices to both Baal and to God. The prophets of Baal were allowed to start the contest by calling on Baal to consume the sacrifice by fire. Baal was the "god" of storms so he should be able to send lightning upon the altar.

The Baalites used all types of rites to get Baal to reply by fire-joyful (danced around the altar) to self-inflicted wounds. There was no answer. No power was displayed by Baal.

Too many times we allow self made gods to enter our lives who

have no power except that which is in our mind. God alone is the All Mighty God.

Prayerful Commitment (1 Kings 18:36-39) Elijah did not pray long prayers or resort to cutting himself to receive and answer from the Lord. He prayed a very brief prayer for God to demonstrate his power to the people in order that their minds might be cleared of any ideas that Baal was a powerful god. Elijah added that he wanted the people to know that he was not the source of power but that he was just the messenger of God. Elijah wanted the people to focus on the Lord, not on a "powerful prophet."

God did demonstrate that he is the only God by sending a consuming fire that "ate up" sacrifice, wet wood, stones of the altar, water and soil around the altar. That is a complete answer! God always gives us complete answers when we seek to know and follow Him.

Simmons is the pastor of Hebron Church, Grenada.

THE BAPTIST

Articles for this column should be sent to the editor of The Baptist, c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Articles that are not deemed suitable will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbch.org.

Journalism competition kicks off

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The third annual Baptist Press Excellence in Journalism Contest is underway. Official entry rules and forms are in the process of being forwarded to Baptist colleges and are available to other prospective entrants via e-mail.

More than 100 awards to schools and to individual student journalists will be presented during the annual Baptist Press Student Journalism Conference, also in its third year. The Oct. 9-11 conference, with a theme of Set the Standard, will return to the Southern Baptist Convention Building in Nashville. The keynote speaker and workshop leaders will be announced later in May.

May 30 is the deadline for this year's entries published or broadcast between Aug. 1, 2002, and May 30, 2003. Last year, 667 entries were received from 21 colleges and universities, with awards given for first, second, and third place.

E-mail requests for official rules and entry forms can be sent to rhargrove@sbc.net.

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Clue: M = S

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Micah 1:2

Churches seizing high-tech opportunities

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Church outreach just got technologically interactive, and sticking an informational church brochure into the screen door of a potential member may become a thing of the past. Savvy congregations are making door-to-door visits with customized, interactive CDs describing their churches, said Jacqueline Swartz of LifeWay Christian Stores' direct marketing department.

LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention is working with an award-winning multimedia company, ReachingFAITH, to produce interactive CD-ROMs customized with information about individual churches. The innovative product was featured on the March 2003 cover of Christian Computing magazine.

The CD-ROM helped Hyde Park Church in Lumberton, N.C., solve an "identity problem," said Mike Pittman, minister of music and outreach.

"I'm always looking at innovative ways to make our church known to the town," he said. "Everybody knew where we were located, but they didn't know our name. The CD-ROM is... relatively inexpensive, and it's something we can give out to the community. It's a kind of interactive business card."

For about the price of a slick brochure, churches can produce a CD-ROM that "allows them to create a personal relationship with a prospect before they enter the church building," Swartz said. "Through the CD-ROM, a church has the opportunity to introduce themselves to prospective members, present its perspective on faith and invite the viewer to be a part of the church community."

LifeWay, working with ReachingFAITH to produce the CDs, offers churches a vehicle to present their faith, their staff, their members



and their programs, Swartz said. Churches also can purchase CDs that present new membership initiatives, Bible studies and sermon series. Universities, colleges and seminaries can use them for student recruitment.

"Our goal for this product," Swartz said, "is to help churches or schools reach out to individuals they may not have been able to reach before or perhaps have not been able to reach in any other way."

The customized CD-ROMs come standard with two videos, including testimonies from members about what their church means to them. It also includes images, text and music. Churches can use one of three templates or request a custom design. The CD-ROM, which can be mailed to prospective members in the community, will include links to the church's website.

"To be most effective in outreach," said J. Stocco, CEO of ReachingFAITH, "the church should meet people where they are and communicate in a way that will best reach them, and that has changed considerably over the past couple of decades. Television and movies capture an audience's attention in ways print does not."

The CD-ROMs offer music, interactive pages and easy to use video. Users simply insert the disc into the CD drive and it plays.

Describing the product as customer-friendly, Pittman noted, "Our CD allows people to go right where they want to go on the disc and find the information they need. This is a great way to get the church's name out in an innovative way."

The standard customized CD-ROM cost, including 1,000 discs, is \$4,850, Swartz said.

More information is available at www.lifewaystores.com/reachingfaith and click on more information.

SEAL wife describes coping skills for military life

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (BP) — After years of coping while her husband, a Navy SEAL, was in harm's way, one military wife has put her thoughts together in a new book called Hope for the Home Front: God's Timeless Encouragement for Today's Military Wife.

Marshale Carter Waddell continues to draw upon God's strength and promises as her husband, Mark, is deployed in the Middle East for Operation Iraqi Freedom, and she offers her experiences and scriptural encouragement to others who bear similar burdens of fear, loneliness, anger, disappointment, temptation, frequent moves, single parenting, and separation from loved ones.

"Nearly 19 years of marriage to a military man have brought with it many trials and crises, all opportunities to learn to trust and fear only God," Waddell writes in the book. "His Word tells me that 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised' (Job 1:21). My husband, my children, my health, my home and my future are gifts from God for this life only. I am learning to let go of Mark and all else that

is dear to me here. The safest place for my treasures is in God's hands, not mine."

Mark and Marshale met as teenagers in Phoenix and married when she graduated from college. When her husband entered the military,

Waddell labored to learn the language that she calls "Militarese."

"The contents of Mark's pockets... introduced me to a language not taught in any school," she writes. "I have never seen Militarese 101 or Interpreting DOD 102 offered at any educational institution. It took me three months not to equate CO, XO and OPS-O with uh-oh and Cheer-ios. It took even longer to remember that the OIC and the AOIC were human beings, not to mention my husband's bosses."

Then Waddell, who now lives in Virginia Beach, Va., began the more arduous task of learning to deal with a husband away from home — possibly in the line of fire — while raising small children. The family was stationed in Hawaii during the first Gulf War in 1991, and Mark Waddell was put on notice that he could be sent to the Middle East. Waddell didn't know how to handle the challenge, so she asked God to help her. That's when she began keeping a journal of

her experiences, which is what she drew upon to write Hope for the Home Front.

"The number of Mark's days were ordained, determined before one of them came to be, regardless if he is a gunslinger or if he sits behind a desk and pushes papers," Waddell writes in the book. "The number and quality of all my days are equally in His loving control. Mark's job is demanding and dangerous. The amount of danger he faces, however, in no way alters God's sovereignty. In contrast, it serves to keep my will on the altar."

While her husband is in the Middle East and cannot tell his location or mission, Waddell must survive on the faith that has gotten her this far. She hopes her book will reach servicemen's wives and family members worldwide who are fighting unique battles of their own at home. Hope for the Home Front is intended to arm those individuals with the power and protection of God's promises against depression, bitterness, destructive choices and desperation.

Hope for the Home Front is self-published by Waddell and was released in March as part of Waddell's endeavor called One Hope Ministry. Books may be ordered online at www.onehopeministry.com or by calling (757) 681-4673.

